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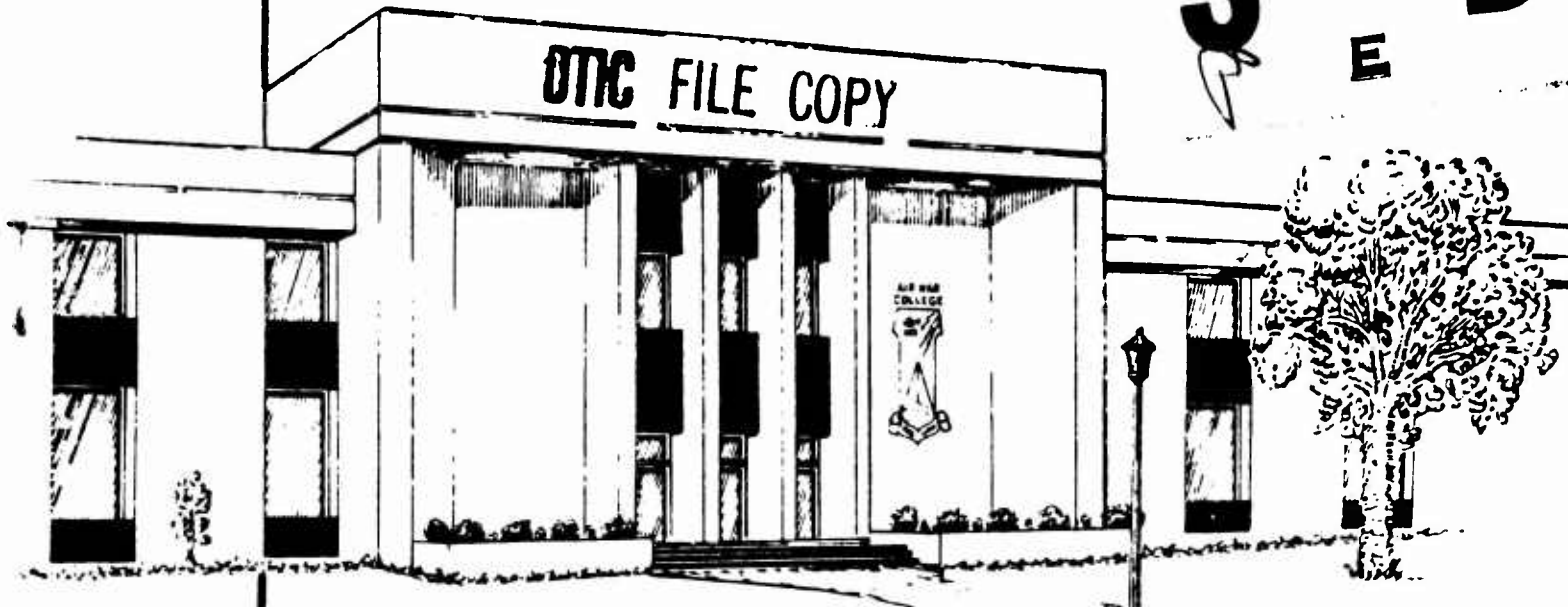
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A CASE STUDY OF JAPAN'S BUREAUCRACY

By LT COL G. R. JACOBSEN

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UNITED STATES AIR FORCE
MAXWELL AIR FORCE BASE, ALABAMA

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A CASE STUDY OF JAPAN'S BUREAUCRACY

by

G. R. Jacobsen
Lt. Colonel, USA

A RESEARCH REPORT SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY
IN
FULFILLMENT OF THE RESEARCH
REQUIREMENT

Research Advisor: Dr. Paul Godwin

MAXWELL AIR FORCE BASE, ALABAMA

February 1986

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AIR WAR COLLEGE RESEARCH REPORT SUMMARY

TITLE: A Case Study of Japan's Bureaucracy

AUTHOR: G.R. Jacobsen, Lieutenant Colonel, USA

Remarks reflecting the rather churlish contemporary regard for the U.S. bureaucracy introduce an in-depth discussion of the Japanese bureaucracy and why it is nationally and internationally recognized as an esteemed and functionally elite institution. The case study incorporates a cultural as well as historical evolution of Japan's civil servants through the rather startling adjustments of the occupation and into the viscera of Japan's bureaucracy today. The crux of the issue is Japan's great bureaucracy and our alleged rather poor bureaucracy. Can a historical and cultural analysis of a great bureaucracy be of any value? The paper concludes with the fact that, indeed, Japan's bureaucracy is an elite, professional organization that out-performs the U.S. bureaucracy as proven by its victories when the two administrative systems interface one-on-one. Some suggestions are made relative to improving the U.S. bureaucracy.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

LTC G.R. Jacobsen has been interested in bureaucracy since graduate level study in 1976. Later, a tour in Japan as the Aide-de-camp and Exec for the Commanding General of United States Army Japan, only increased his interest by experiencing first-hand the revered professionalism of the Japanese bureaucracy. During his 20 years in the Army, LTC Jacobsen has served four overseas tours, two in Asia and two in Europe. His primary military specialty is Armor and his secondary specialty is personnel management and administration. He was awarded the Silver Star as a result of a combat tour in Vietnam. He holds a baccalaureate degree in Sociology from the University of Oregon and a master's degree in Organizational Behavior from the University of Missouri. His military education includes the numerous Army courses as well as the Command and General Staff College; LTC Jacobsen is also a graduate of the Air War College, class of 1986.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Bureaucracy within the United States has traditionally been earmarked by a rather ribald connotation. Unelected Washington bureaucrats received a great deal of public disclaim for their alleged arbitrary edicts which in turn have seemingly thrust the "rule" of the bureaucracy into the ordinary business of ordinary people. Many others condemn our bureaucracy as a growing behemoth that is inefficient and corrupt. Throw the "rascals" out is an often heard cry in American society. Why is our bureaucracy so unpopular? Doesn't this omnipresent negativism within our society serve to ossify the bureaucracy within the United States? How much has a generally accepted derogatory definition of a governmental administrative group affected that very group? Some insights need to be sought. If the public administrators of the United States are affected by a publically perceived bureaucratic malady, or if the bureaucracy actually requires internal rebuilding, then it seems that some solution is necessary and may very well be found through an examination of another similar bureaucratic system. In this view then, this paper will consider Japan's bureaucracy with an eye towards how that bureaucracy survived and transitioned the post-war occupation. An assessment of a bureaucracy that was modernized and later survived a major social, economic and political upheaval should reveal some significant insights.

It's understood that Japan is oriental rather than occidental and is much smaller than the United States in geographic size. Nonetheless, the recent economic growth and political orientation of Japan epitomizes it as a capitalistic democracy greatly similar to and influenced by the United States. An examination of Japan's bureaucracy seems apropos as well as propitious.

As a final note of introduction, bureaucracy clearly includes the Department of Defense. "Unelected" Washington bureaucrats and public administrators clearly include the leadership throughout the Department of Defense at every level. Thus, the publically perceived bureaucratic malady aforementioned applies not only to the "stuff" of running our national, state and local governments, but to the very viscera of our national security administration as well. That civilian to military nexus is critical to the overall public administration of the United States of America. How successful that overall administration is or will be could make the "difference". I'll let the reader establish what the "difference" may mean from his or her personal frame of reference.

CHAPTER II

CURRENT IMPRESSIONS OF AMERICAN BUREAUCRACY

As the title suggests, this chapter will attempt to support the contention made in the introductory hypothesis that our bureaucracy and our bureaucrats are viewed by the vast majority of the American public as disdainful. I will pursue this brief investigation of contemporary impressions of American bureaucracy through several literature reviews. Obviously, I'd like to see literature express both pro and con aspects and to some small extent this is achieved. However, as I've already asserted, this proved to be a difficult task; even those rare "pro" articles seemed to express scorn and often indicated that the goodness found in bureaucracy rested in its very banality. In sum, it wasn't easy to find people saying good things about our bureaucracy; I feel the following will provide adequate testimony. I want to re-emphasize that this random analysis of periodical literature written within the last 15 years did not involve a biased selection of "anti" writings.

Generally speaking, there are two basic and traditional types of definitions for the word bureaucracy. And, with these definitions we see the deprecation start with "the" normally sanctified dictionary. One type of definition is rather sanguine in nature. However, the other portends that bureaucracy is culpable and possessed by a

malady. These definitions, subsumed by general type, are as follows:

(1) The whole body of nonelective government officials; the administrative policy-making group in any large organization; systematic administration characterized by specialization of functions, objective qualifications for office, action according to fixed rules, and a hierarchy of authority. (2) A system of administration marked by constant striving for increased functions and power, by lack of initiative and flexibility, by indifference to human needs or public opinion, and by a tendency to defer decisions to superiors or to impede action with red tape.¹

These two broad definition classifications have, I believe, served to ossify our bureaucracy within the United States. Further, the latter classification has in no way been commodious and has tended to create derogatory connotations regarding our bureaucracy in general. The question seems to be then, how much has a generally accepted derogatory definition of a governmental administrative group affected that very group? It's likely that the aforementioned question will never be satisfactorily answered. An argument over whether or not the definition was a result of an older bureaucracy or vice-versa is aimless, although interesting to opine.

John Barron, in an article titled "Too Much Government by Decree", has indicated that "we" are all but lost due to a virulent and leviathan bureaucracy.² Acrimony runs high in Barron's article while he dwells on the absurdity and harshness of the sweeping orders from unelected Washington bureaucrats. He bemoans our fate of being "ruled by arbitrary edicts" exuding from

our current bureaucracy and feels the bureaucracy has moved to run the lives of the public in our society. Barron's whole theme pleads for a fight from his fellow Americans against "bureaucratic usurpation" to preserve freedom. I wonder if Barron perhaps read the dictionary definition of bureaucracy long ago and has since socialized and internalized what he read, reinforced by others with the same opinion. To read Barron's article one would think our own internal bureaucracy a worse enemy than Hitler and Fascism. If Barron's feelings are held by many others "we" are in a sad state of affairs. Hopefully, there are some good things to be said about our system. Also, I think it worthwhile to point out that Barron's articles appeared in the very conservative Reader's Digest.

Peter Woll, a political science professor at Brandeis University, and Michelle Jones, a reporter for the Palm Beach Post, wrote an article around the theme that the bureaucracy is becoming a safeguard against one-man rule. The article "Against One-Man Rule--Bureaucratic Defense in Depth" appeared in The Nation.³ In view of the article's date it shouldn't be too difficult to realize that it was the threat of Richard M. Nixon and his alleged attempt at creating an autocracy that encouraged the authors to write this article.

I was a little surprised and relieved that this article promoted bureaucracies as a means of preservation of the democratic system. I was also somewhat surprised

to see a university professor and newspaper reporter thinking enough alike to work together as co-authors; I find Woll and Jones' relationship, because of their backgrounds, interesting.

What are the proper limits of Presidential power? Woll and Jones start their article by maintaining that as a result of Nixon and Watergate, many concerned people are attempting to answer that question concerning Presidential power and becoming worried that the growth of that power is becoming obstreperous. For evidence of this incipientness, they point to:

Nixon's attempt to dismantle the office of Economic Opportunity, an office created by Congress, his impoundment of funds appropriated by Congress for water pollution, highway and other programs, and his repeated disregard of Congressional resolutions on the war in Southeast Asia.⁴

To avoid going completely over the edge and thereby in an apparent attempt to maintain credibility, Woll and Jones back up a little and state that,

While there is no doubt that Nixon frequently thwarts the will and intent of Congress, it does not necessarily mean we are on the verge of one-man rule. Nixon apparently would like to rettle the federal government 'U.S. Government, Inc., President: Richard M. Nixon.'⁵

I make these rather long quotes for their efficacy and because I felt the thoughts worth sharing with exactness necessary.

It's at this point that the above authors make their pitch for the bureaucracy as a safeguard. They feel that the bureaucracy, by its very nature, resists and ignores

Presidential commands (talk about damning by faint praise).

"In a system marked by a weak Congress and a Supreme Court that is increasingly taking its direction from Nixon appointees, the bureaucracy is turning into a crucial check on Presidential power."⁶

I found it interesting to note that Woll and Jones propose that the bureaucracy should be viewed as a "fourth branch of government" separate and independent of the traditional three branches. Since the bureaucracy is specifically accountable to the courts and Congress it is viable as a constraint on Presidential power.

For further support of their argument in behalf of bureaucracy, they subscribe to the idea that administrative agencies and regulatory commissions have independent sources of political power. For example, DOD relies on the armaments industry, agriculture and on farmers, labor the AFL-CIO, etc. These constituencies are stable and have a constant need while a President is in office no longer than eight years. Since bureaucracies rely on the support of these constituencies, the wills and wishes of the constituencies are very often regarded more important than the wills and wishes of a President. In short, a bureaucracy is long term; Presidents are short term. "Agencies that lack independent political support in Congress and are not supported by private pressure groups are apt to be swayed by the President"⁷

Woll and Jones also make the valid argument that the President, in order to survive, must delegate authority and as a result loses much of his control. Concomitant with the necessity to delegate authority is the thought that the federal

bureaucracy is so huge that a President could never know everything that's going on much less be an expert on even a small portion of our system's numerous specialities. In our technical and specialized society the President and Congress are the generalists and the bureaucracy is the "domain of the specialist" say the authors. By this very fact the bureaucracy will survive and avoid remolding by a single Chief Executive; thus, a President's power is curbed.

Woll and Jones lay the responsibility of maintaining our constitutional democracy in the laps of professional administrators. The limits on the bureaucrats are often only those they impose upon themselves. Thus, in the end we will depend upon the morals and values of our high-level administrators. Their closing sentence is a paradox and deserves to be quoted.

The pluralistic and independent bureaucracy, although often inefficient and yielding to special-interest group pressure, helps to preserve the balance of powers among the branches of government that is necessary for the preservation of our system of constitutional democracy.⁸

Most articles on bureaucracy that I have read condemned the bureaucracy for those very reasons that Woll and Jones praise it. I feel like I should make up something "profound" and polemic such as--bureaucracy is bad but because it's bad, it's good. because without it we couldn't preserve our system????

Another provoking thought is the point made by Woll and Jones that the Congress and the bureaucracy work together, united so to speak, against the President; I might say strange bedfellows. I can honestly say I've never considered

Congress and the bureaucracy in that light. Indeed, I've never really thought of bureaucracy as the fourth branch of government; it makes some sense.

It's nice to know somebody considers the bureaucracy good for something. However, the fact that Woll and Jones consider it good because it's often inefficient, yielding and simply a banal long term "thing" is disturbing. Is it really all that bad and is it all that difficult to say something good about bureaucracy?

Another interesting article for an illustration of impressions of bureaucracy was written by Allan L. Damon for the American Heritage.⁹ His statistical analysis and approach to the subject proved to be very enlightening and thought provoking. Even though his article is 11 years old, his juxtaposing of statistics with bureaucrats was too much to resist; the efficacy is no less viable today.

Damon's article takes a look at the bureaucracy of 1974 in the United States and compares it with the bureaucracy of some years ago; he also compares our bureaucratic system with that of some other countries. The article is founded on what Damon calls two "striking" facts: (1) The vast size of bureaucracy in the United States, and (2) the seemingly low esteem in which the bureaucracy is held. I feel this 11-year old juxtaposition critical to my central theses and thus worth repeating. This particular brand of statistical analysis is rare and especially pertinent.

At the present time 13,604,000 men and women, not counting military personnel, are government employees at the federal, state and local levels. This is, in

TABLE 1

Governmental Employment and Payrolls: 1960 to 1983

Type of Government	1960	1965	1970	1975	1977	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983
<u>Employees (1,000)</u>											
Total.....	8,808	10,589	13,028	14,973	15,459	15,628	15,971	16,213	15,968	15,918	16,034
<u>Federal (civilian)</u>											
State and local.....	2,421	2,588	2,881	2,890	2,848	2,885	2,869	2,898	2,865	2,848	2,875
Percent of total..	6,387	8,001	10,147	12,084	12,611	12,743	13,102	13,315	13,103	13,071	13,159
<u>State</u>											
Local.....	72.5	75.6	77.9	80.7	81.6	81.5	82.0	82.1	82.1	82.1	82.1
<u>October Payrolls</u>											
(mil. dol.)	4,860	5,973	7,392	8,813	9,120	9,204	9,403	9,562	9,377	9,324	9,344
Total.....	3,333	4,884	8,334	13,224	15,338	16,483	18,077	19,935	21,193	23,124	24,525
<u>Federal (civilian)</u>											
State and local.....	1,118	1,484	2,428	3,584	3,918	4,344	4,728	5,205	5,239	5,959	6,301
Percent of total..	2,215	3,400	5,906	9,640	11,420	12,139	13,349	14,730	15,594	17,165	18,224
<u>State</u>											
Local.....	66.5	69.6	70.9	72.9	74.5	73.7	73.8	73.9	75.3	74.2	74.3
<u>October Payrolls</u>											
(mil. dol.)	524	849	1,612	2,653	3,195	3,483	3,896	4,288	4,668	5,028	5,346
Total.....	1,691	2,551	4,294	6,987	8,225	8,656	9,480	10,445	11,287	12,137	12,878
<u>Average Annual Percent Change</u>											
<u>Employees, total</u>											
Federal (civilian)...	3.5	3.8	4.2	2.8	2.8	1.1	2.2	1.5	-1.5	-0.3	.7
State.....	.4	1.3	2.2	.6	-.7	1.3	-.5	1.0	-1.2	-.6	.9
Local.....	(NA)	5.8	6.3	3.5	3.3	1.4	4.5	1.5	-.7	.6	1.8
<u>Payrolls, total</u>											
Federal (civilian)...	8.0	7.9	11.3	9.4	7.7	7.5	9.7	10.3	6.3	9.1	6.1
State.....	5.7	5.8	10.3	8.1	4.6	10.9	8.7	10.1	.6	13.7	5.7
Local.....	(NA)	10.1	13.7	10.5	9.7	9.0	11.1	10.8	8.9	7.7	6.3
<u>October Payrolls</u>											
(mil. dol.)	8.6	8.6	11.0	10.2	8.5	5.2	10.2	8.1	7.5	6.3	6.1

Source: Statistical Abstract of the United States, 1984.

TABLE 2

Governmental Employment and Payrolls, By Level of Government
and By Function: 1983

Function	Employees (1,000)			October Payrolls (mil. dol.)		
	Total Federal (civilian)	Total State	Total local	Total Federal (civilian)	Total State	Total local
National Defense.....	1,042	(x)	(x)	2,155	(x)	(x)
Postal Service.....	669	(x)	(x)	1,512	(x)	(x)
Education.....	6,807	16	6,792	1,666	5,125	9,045
Teachers.....	3,808	(x)	3,808	495	3,313	6,328
Highways.....	532	5	527	243	284	789
Health and hospitals.....	1,668	269	1,399	670	730	2,415
Public Welfare.....	409	12	397	176	221	560
Police Protection.....	753	64	671	76	595	1,306
Fire Protection.....	310	(x)	310	(x)	310	477
Sanitation and sewerage....	216	(x)	216	1	215	319
Parks and recreation.....	249	(x)	249	29	220	245
Natural Resources.....	440	244	196	159	37	836
Financial administration..	414	108	306	119	187	633
All Other.....	2,545	449	2,096	676	1,420	4,238
					1,088	3,150
						1,151
						1,999
Total.....	16,034	2,875	13,159	3,816	9,344	24,525
						6,302
						18,224
						5,346
						12,878

Source: Statistical Abstract of the United States, 1984.

a work force of 88 million one of every 6.5 employees is on a government payroll. This compares with one in twenty-four in 1900, one in eighteen in 1930, and one in ten in 1950.

State and local employment has more than doubled since 1950. The total then was 4.3 million employees; the last available total (fiscal 1972) is 10.8 million, more than 7 million of whom are in education--2.7 million as teachers, 4.3 million in administrative, auxiliary, and custodial services.

Roughly 78 per cent of all federal civilian jobs now in existence have been added since 1930. Approximately 30 per cent have been added since 1950.

When George Washington took office in 1789, the nation's population was estimated at 3.5 million; the bureaucracy numbered a mere 340. By 1974 the population had multiplied sixty times; the bureaucracy, 8,170 times.

Between 1930 and 1950 the population grew by 23 per cent; the bureaucracy increased by 326 per cent.

Between 1930 and 1974 the population grew by 71 per cent; the bureaucracy, by 462 per cent.

At the present time there are 2,777,586 employees on the federal civilian payroll, or roughly one employee for every 77 persons in the population. This compares to one for every 375 in 1900 and one for 204 in 1930.

Surprisingly, the ratio of federal employees to population in 1974 is about the same as in 1950, because the bureaucratic growth of 41 per cent was matched by a population increase of 39 per cent.

The federal budget for the first two years of government, beginning in 1789, was \$4.3 million, at a per capita cost of only \$1.22. By 1930, when the budget reached \$3.5 billion, the per capita cost was \$28. In 1950 budget expenditures totaled \$39 billion, at a per capita cost of \$260.

The proposed budget for fiscal 1975 is \$304 billion, a figure roughly 8,950 times greater than the two-year budget for 1789-91. The per capita cost is approximately \$1,500.¹⁰ *Note: Data does not consider inflation and economic growth.

For the latest statistics and comparative analysis on governmental employment and payrolls see Tables 1 and 2.

After the above convincing evidence that our bureaucracy is indeed vast, Damon offers the same point made by Peter Woll and Rochelle Jones in their article "Against One-Man Rule - Bureaucratic Defense in Depth;" the bureaucracy now forms a fourth branch of government. Both articles were

written in proximity to that of Richard M. Nixon's time in power. Well, perhaps Nixon accomplished more than he realizes. Damon reinforced his supposition by stating that, after all, the bureaucracy was able to hold the government together while the "President and Congress seemed to give way to drift and indecision" during the Watergate scandal, impeachment attempts and concerns over the energy crisis. "The bureaucracy of big government, on balance, has performed no better and no worse than the bureaucracy of big business."¹¹ I agree.

Next, Damon concentrates on his second "striking" fact which concerns the low esteem apparently bestowed upon the bureaucracy. He asks, "Why is it always open season on the bureaucrat? Why in an age of complex administrative systems is the governmental employee singled out for derogation?"¹² Damon goes on then, to quickly answer his own question with two possibilities. "One is the historic role of the bureaucracy; the other is the peculiarly American perception of what government service actually entails."¹³ The historic role of the bureaucracy, according to Damon, was born outside the United States and was traditionally identified with the interests of the elite and ruling powers rather than the "people". As a result, bureaucrats have been historically viewed with fear and distrust. This is perhaps easier to understand when the argument is made that a ruling power group in Europe so often meant oppression. In America some of this perception has obviously

lingered, however, we've developed our own unique method of bureaucracy defamation. Originally, the role of the bureaucracy in the United States was small, low profile and essentially clerical and custodial in nature; it remained this way until apparently around 1930 and then mushroomed in size and became something besides a home for janitors. Also, the primary function of the European bureaucracies is not a viable function for the American counterpart. Damon says one of the most important duties of the European bureaucracy is "defending the state against the threatened depredations of shifting regimes."¹⁴ Apparently a shift in the ruling European political party has often meant a rather larger change in national ideology and it was or is up to the bureaucracy to hold things together. In the United States a change in administration is not so significant and ergo, the bureaucracy is "robbed" of an esteemed role in our society. Also, in America the bureaucrats are traditionally not counted on for policy formulation and decision-making; the opposite is true in most other countries. The private sector in the United States has always been called and depended upon to provide the requisite skills to run our country. "The result, of course, is that the bureaucracy in this country has been unable to claim any special authority or special place in American life."¹⁵ This is important. I think we will see quite a contrast when we consider Japan's bureaucracy. Maybe this is the key.

Allan Damon next addresses the recent changes in

our bureaucracy, changes not only in size but also those changes in power and influence. He very succinctly credits these changes to the United States post WW II emergence as a world power; a transition from an agrarian to an urban-industrial society. Most people credit the recent bureaucratic changes to simple population increase coupled with an awesome, voracious and unresponsive government. Not so says Damon, who points out that:

the surprising fact is that the American bureaucracy, (despite the many demands placed upon it) is not the world's largest, nor is it's rate of increase markedly different from the growth of civil services in other industrialized countries in the postwar world.¹⁶

Damon also emphasizes the fact that our bureaucracy has, in fact, significantly declined during the past few years. I imagine the wind down and ultimately the end of the war in Southeast Asia was or is largely responsible for that. The United States has a history of flagellating its Defense Department during the latter stages and at the end of a war.

Damon closes by stating that he feels the weakest link in our bureaucracy is that there is not provision for a systematic evaluation of the "total system". These are the author's last sentences:

The fourth branch of government should be scrutinized as closely as the Presidency, Congress, or the courts. It is perhaps one measure of its quality that it has functioned well despite our ignorance. But it is equally clear that it's power to affect our lives is great; it deserves to be challenged, criticized, and understood.¹⁷

I guess you could say--famous last words.

Still, another look at our bureaucracy is provided by U.S. News and World Report, "Red Tape Snafus Trap the Unwary".¹⁸ The title quickly tells the reader where this

article and its magazine stand relative to our subject. The entire article involves itself with describing one governmental bungle after the other. Statements like "foul-ups are rife", "computers are increasingly blamed for governmental snafus--they give bureaucrats a handy excuse for mistakes" and "typical are cases in which a person spars with bureaucracy and emerges as the loser", cause obvious concern. Not once does this article consider the fact that there may be two sides to a story or that there could be a reason for such and so. It simply (and seemingly gleefully) reports what a reporter was told and then makes the apparent conclusions. Is this a liberal journalist blindly seeking publication "inches" to make a living? Maybe a better question is are all journalists liberals? His approach, by my estimation, was at least one-sided by dumping examples of bureaucratic mistakes in the reader's lap and then more or less saying that we've just proved how really rotten the system is. The only thing this article proved to me was how biased the writer and perhaps the magazine is as their attempts to defame the bureaucracy were really ludicrous and and supercilious, not to mention obviously one-sided. At any rate, the point should be that the magazine's editor obviously allowed and perhaps encouraged that type of approach; after all, didn't we decide that "everyone" knows our bureaucracy is cupable by it's very nature?

As if to make sure readers get the point, in April, 1983. U.S. News and World Report ran an earlier article very

similar in nature to the one aforementioned. "Washington's Red Tape Just Keeps Rolling Out"¹⁹ is the title and again the title lucidly describes the state of our bureaucracy; more examples of "...people fogbound in a federal never-never land". Once again an emotional one-sided tirade, complete with ridiculing cartoon. U.S News and World Report has presented others (other articles on bureaucracy) over time but these two should provide the sample; I found none that were positive relative to the bureaucracy in any way. That in itself is significant.

Under a Fat, Fraud and Waste category in National Review, Greg O'Brien wrote a humorous article illustrating bureaucratic growth and excess.²⁰ The title is "Why Skinny Uncle Sam Looks Like Fat Uncle Fred" and apparently the article is supposed to reflect an actual experience that the author was subjected to when he worked for a government agency. Note the past tense--worked. O'Brien is a lawyer who used to work for the federal bureaucracy but now works as an attorney with the Southern California Edison Company (or at least did work there in October, 1983).

In summary. O'Brien describes the life of a Xerox machine that supported his office on the tenth floor of the building that housed his government agency. "It" evolved from an unmanned reproduction machine with no attendants and no special "place" to moving down to the eighth floor, being combined with another machine and eventually commanding the attention of seven people in a private reproduction room.

The author had great fun, apparently, leading the reader through this bureaucratic evolution that was allegedly developed to avoid a rare fraudulent personal use of the Xerox machine for reproducing recipes and the like. The point is clear, however. Look at the title and the reader knows the intent of the article without reading it. I suspect that Greg O'Brien forgot to mention that his old Xerox machine was now serving the entire agency vice his small section on the tenth floor and that some of the seven people assigned to the machine had other jobs as well. Actually, I don't think he wanted to be too objective, after all, writing the article was a lot of fun. I guess I'm being a little subjective to get the point across: Bureaucracy was once again treated in an infelicitous manner.

This investigation of contemporary impressions of American bureaucracy could go on indefinitely. The articles written on the bureaucracy certainly exist in sufficient number to keep this chapter going much, much longer. However, those articles highlighted fairly represent contemporary writings on bureaucracy. The rather significant point to be noted is that the vast majority of the articles are baleful and onerous in their assessment of our bureaucracy. A few appear objective in their criticisms and provide "faint" praise but more often the articles represent a puerile defamation of bureaucracy. Too much of this and we would have everyone believing that a bureaucrat was a "Centaur"--with all its appropriate connotations. Maybe we do believe

this already. Now, that includes this writer and very likely the reader. Is "it" really that bad; does "everyone" really believe it?

Our problem seems to be that many people do indeed believe it. I even hear it over and over again from my fellow students. At any rate, the above impressions regarding our bureaucracy seem to cry out for some insight. Hopefully, a careful look at the history and development of the very highly regarded and functional Japanese bureaucracy will provide some answers; if not answers, then perhaps, as I've suggested, insights. We desperately need something, anything! Our present state seems incorrigible and moribund.

CHAPTER III

IMPORTANCE OF BUREAUCRACY IN JAPAN

I'm hopeful that the above look at some various conceptions of our bureaucracy have provided a suitable and "fair" frame of reference for this case study of Japanese bureaucracy. By fair I mean a cross section of attitudes (if that's possible) rather than simply considering defamatory opinions which were abundantly available. As earlier alluded to, I felt some objectivity necessary if we were to trap the "true" nature of our bureaucracy as seen by contemporary writers; I'll assume their opinions are representative but unfortunately, I'm afraid some are more erudite and perhaps more rational (only some are really rational) than the opinions of many Americans.

As with any modern democratic country of any size Japan has a government that necessarily employs a bureaucracy. In many respects the Japanese bureaucracy appears to bear the "stamp" of all other bureaucratic organizations. There seems to be a division of labor, rather detailed regulations, hierarchial controls, formalized measures of access to the bureaucracy through an examination system, and some degree of impersonality. What then, if anything, makes the Japanese governmental bureaucracy any different from other bureaucracies? It seems that perhaps the greatest contrast is the large amount of prestige and power enjoyed by the Japanese bureaucracy as compared to the bureaucracy within

the United States. Even though that power and prestige has been diminished in recent years, there can be little doubt that the current Japanese bureaucracy plays a role in government that would be wholly unacceptable to the people and traditions of the United States or Great Britain.¹

Japan has had a long and deep history that has placed repeated emphasis on the primordial importance of the executive. The executive was originally, of course, manifested in the personage of the emperor. This executive oriented tradition has also automatically bred a centuries-old kambatsu (literally, official clique) that has traditionally acted as direct servants of the emperor during Japan's pre-World War II history and now, in post-war Japan, they make up a body of public administrators for the Prime Minister.² Naturally the nature of the bureaucrats has changed somewhat over time, but the point is that the original and traditional initiative in policy-making that has always been in the hands of the executive branch and, ergo, more or less in the hands of the bureaucrats, is largely still there. Thus today, the bureaucracy in Japan still enjoys a paramount and prestigious role in policy initiation.³

In fact, there are many voices in Japan that would argue that the bureaucrats are too prestigious and too influential in policy-making. Japan's bureaucrats are so elite that they defame the common citizen rather than vice versa in the United States: "Kanson mimpi--officials esteemed, the people despised." The accepted pre-war role

of the bureaucrats as the "arms and legs of the imperial will" perhaps hasn't been changed that much in post-war Japan.⁴

If we are to appreciate the important role of the bureaucracy in Japan's governmental structure we must first consider it's history.

CHAPTER IV

A HISTORICAL CASE STUDY OF JAPAN'S BUREAUCRACY

Bureaucracy of any formal type was totally unknown by the Japanese people until sometime in the seventh century. Prior to the seventh century the only trace of bureaucracy seemed to be in the family and kinship groupings. Strong patriarchal kinship ties developed early in Japan as a means of power and authority as well as security. They possessed collectively oriented universalistic norms that were largely impersonal.¹ Strict adherence to those norm rules was expected and required a great deal of self-discipline. Perhaps this was the true beginning of the Japanese bureaucrat.

During the seventh century, however, the various patriarchal clan systems with their struggles for power throughout Japan threatened the overall existing power structure of the emperor--a divine ruler who was allegedly a direct descendant of the sun goddess, Amaterasu-omikami.² The leaders of the time, in an attempt to correct this perceived usurpation, turned to the T'ang dynasty in China for guidance and a model to emulate. The Japanese leaders were convinced that China's greatness and degree of power under the T'ang dynasty was a direct result of their highly advanced and developed administrative system. It was a Chinese "brand" of bureaucracy then, that the Japanese adopted as their original "institutional framework" for bureaucracy.³ It's also interesting to note that the Japanese also adopted,

even if only temporarily until centuries later, the Chinese civil service examination system. Parts of the civil service examination system, as we will see later, still survive today.

In China the civil service had been originally instituted to destroy the aristocratic power structure. In Japan it was to be used to do exactly the opposite; the bureaucracy was to be used in Japan to strengthen the political structure of the aristocracy and the symbolistic emperor. Theoretically the empire was ruled by the emperor but in reality the emperor was shielded from politics largely controlled by an aristocracy.⁴ It was this adoption of the Chinese bureaucracy and its ultimate adaption to the Japanese culture that reveals one of Japan's strongest suits.

The Japanese did not blindly initiate every aspect of the Chinese bureaucratic system. They were very selective and modified things with a shrewd discerning nature to match their own coveted way of life. It was this modified form of Chinese bureaucracy that protected and served a Japanese elite for roughly the next eight centuries. In fact, this bureaucracy became a part of the aristocracy and the line of demarkation between the rulers and the administrators of that rule became quite fuzzy; there was, however, a deep lucid schism between the aristocracy and the "commoners". The borrowing from the Chinese bureaucratic system seemed, indeed, to fulfill the urgent need for a strongly centralized administration, with the emperor at

the summit of a structure supported and controlled by the urban aristocracy.⁵ This was to be the foundation of a contemporary Japanese bureaucracy.

The remainder of Japan's history from approximately the seventeenth century forward, is generally accepted as the beginning of Japanese political modernization. The true thrust of that modernization, however, surged forward at an unprecedented rate beginning with the Meiji era in 1867. In view of a need to clarify and understand the historical perspective of "modern" Japanese political and bureaucratic history, a table will provide a brief but significant chronology of that history (Table 3).

The Tokugawa period that followed the previously mentioned aristocratic dominated era of Japanese history, is most often referred to as a type of centralized feudalism. This age of feudalism was dominated by military rule fostered by the shogun. The shogun was the hereditary commander-in-chief of the Japanese army. The shogun, descriptively referred to as a kind of generalissimo, overwhelmed Japan by military force and proceeded to run it in terms of a traditional establishment.⁶ Various regions or territories (fiefs) were given to various grades of nobles by the shogun in payment for their services and loyalty during the military overthrow of Japan. These fiefs that came to be ruled by noble lords were known as hans and the lords known as daimyo. Servants to the shogun and the various lords were composed of two grades of samurai. Joshi was the high-grade samurai

TABLE 3

Modern Japanese Political History

Date	Event
1603	Beginning of Tokugawa Period.
1867	End of Tokugawa Period.
1867-68	Meiji Restoration and beginning of Meiji Period.
1889-90	Promulgation and enforcement of the Meiji Constitution.
1894-95	Sino-Japanese War.
1904-05	Russo-Japanese War.
1912	End of Meiji Period and beginning of Taisho Period.
1924-32	Period of greatest strength and achievement by prewar Japanese political parties.
1926	End of Taisho Period and beginning of Showa Period.
1931	Outbreak of the Manchurian Incident.
1932-45	Period of growing military ascendancy and ultra-nationalism in Japanese politics.
1936	Military Revolt of February 26 in Tokyo.
1937	Outbreak of the China Incident.
1941	Outbreak of general warfare in the Pacific (Dec. 7).
1945	War in the Pacific ends (Aug. 15).
1945-52	Allied Occupation of Japan (Sept. 2, 1945-April 28, 1952).
1946	Promulgation of the new Japanese Constitution (Nov. 3).
1947	Enforcement of the new Japanese Constitution (May 3). Beginning of the cold war between U.S. and U.S.S.R.
1950	North Korea invasion of South Korea (June 25).
1951	Treaty of Peace between the U.S. and a majority of the Allied Powers and Japan (Sept. 8). Security Treaty between the U.S. and Japan (Sept. 8); revised in 1960.
1952	Allied Occupation ends and Japan regains her sovereign and independent status (April 28).

Source: Ward, Robert E., Japan's Political System, Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1967, p.7.

and kashi was the low grade samurai. The samurai were traditionally warriors and retained a military ideology until modern times.⁷

It was the samurai that has come to be a cynosure throughout modern times as being the tendentious force pointing the way to traditional Japanese bureaucracy. The traditions and styles of the samurai, I believe, still have a significant impact on Japanese bureaucracy of today; not only on the bureaucracy itself but on the people that accept or reject a bureaucracy as well.

During the Tokugawa period of Japan, centralization was apparently not considered in the contemporary sense. There were basically two processes of centralization being carried on. These two types of centralization were national and regional, both being conducted simultaneously. The national government was the Tokugawa house and its primary concern was peace, its own accretion as well as its own security. The peace effort could foster both the growth of pre-eminence and security. Regional daimyo were left to rule their fiefdoms as they saw fit, as long as their administration was, ostensibly at least, non-heretical in regard to the administration of the shogun.⁸ In the eyes of most commoners, I suppose the process of centralized administration stopped at the regional level with the lord; centralization to the commoner was relative.

The central government of the Tokugawa period soon developed a civil bureaucracy to handle the administration

of the Tokugawa rule. The civil offices consisted of a chief minister, five or six senior counselors and three to five junior counselors. These offices comprised the viscera of the central administration. The senior counselors were the key and collectively determined major state policies.⁹ Two groups of administrators were developed to be under the supervision of the senior and junior counselors respectively. The group under the senior counselors was responsible for supervising the daimyo. The civil administrators under the junior counselors were responsible for supervising members of their own class. Another class of civil servants was the kanjo bugyo. They had the responsibility for the more familiar tasks of a bureaucrat; they handled finance, civil government, police, justice, transportation and agricultural policy.¹⁰ I find the class supervision concept an interesting but baleful addition to the civil bureaucracy. The concept has not been completely eliminated even today in American society; perhaps the Nixon incident, as well as other incidents, has produced an odium that will cause a questioning as to the character of any "ingenuous" individual.

While the central government of the Tokugawa period was developing its bureaucracy, the regional governments of the separate fiefs were also developing a bureaucratic structure. This structure was not at all unlike that of the shogunate except, of course, it was on a smaller scale. In addition to a structure similar to that of the shogun, the

daimyo used local influential villagers as a supplemental base for his bureaucratic machinery.¹¹

It's emphasized that the above mentioned administrative service that developed during the Tokugawa period was a "civil" service. The period after the close of the sixteenth century was mostly of a peaceful nature and as such, the samurai had to make a decided transition from military functions to work of almost entirely a bureaucratic nature.

It was the samurai who came to be predominate in the civil bureaucracy for several reasons. The Tokugawa peace forced the samurai class to discard their warrior ethos so they were largely available. The samurai training, indoctrination and behavior were the most extreme expression, in general, of Japanese self-discipline. "They were taught to see themselves as exemplary culture-carriers and wished commoners to regard them as selfless, and dedicated to the public good."¹² What better credentials could a shogunate or lord want? In addition, the different strata of samurai were of an acceptable "class" standing while the samurai was also among the most educated. He also possessed leadership experience. It should not be surprising, then, that the "civil" bureaucracy as soon filled largely by the samurai.

I think the key to the samurai and their sedulous contribution to the nature of Japanese bureaucracy is manifested in their very serious and self-controlled approach to life. Indeed, I think the concept of samurai self-discipline will ultimately prove in this paper to be the very core

of the Japanese bureaucracy and thus perhaps reveal the insight this paper seeks. Samurai dedication, reverence and indoctrination is best illustrated by a seventeenth century example of an incident that took place in a higher class samurai house. The illustration is rather long but I feel its impact is piquant and overwhelmingly apropos to our understanding of the samurai and to the Japanese bureaucracy in which the samurai played such an important role. I've read the example over and over, and I find it simply inexorable as to what it reveals. Also, I am confounded by the tacit implications that it convoked for the Japanese bureaucracy. I will share the illustration with the reader in hopes that he will gain an appreciation for its impact such as I experienced.

This ancestor of mine was lord of our family during the period when it was a government requirement that men of his class should have two handmaids. This was to guard against the possibility of there being no heir, that being an unspeakable calamity to people who believed that a childless family meant heavenly annihilation. Handmaids were always selected by the wife, from families of her own rank; and their position, although inferior in influence, was considered an honoured as that of the wife.

The second of my ancestor's handmaids was named Kikuno. Her lord was old enough to be her father, but it must be true that he loved her, for our family records show that he loaded her relatives with gifts and with honours. Of course, we Japanese never say anything not nice about our ancestors, and it may be that family traditions are not always reliable, but they all praise this man, and I like to believe them true.

Every house of noble class, in those days, was divided into the home department, ruled by the mistress, where there were only women attendants, and the lord's department, where every branch of work was done by men. For delicate and artistic duties, such as tea-serving and flower arranging, graceful youths were chosen who dressed in gay garments with swinging sleeves like girls, and wore their hair in an artistic crown-queue with fluffy sides.

Among these attendants of my ancestor was a youth who

was an especial favourite. He must have possessed both rank and culture, for he was the son of his lord's highest retainer. Although the departments of the lord and the mistress were entirely separate, there was daily passing back and forth on formal errands, and also many gatherings for duty or for entertainment, in which both men and women took part. On these occasions the gentle Kikuno and the handsome youth were frequently thrown together. She was only seventeen. Her lord was twice her age, and his thoughts were of war and its grim duties. The gentle, soft-voiced youth, whose talk was of poetry and flowers, won her heart; and it was the old story of Launcelot and Guinevere.

We have no reason to believe that any real wrong was in the heart of either; but a Japanese girl was taught from childhood to subdue self, and when she married--and to become a handmaid was one type of marriage--she was expected to live with no thought of self at all.

Rumours reached the ears of the master, but he waved them aside as absurd. One day, however, he walked into the great room adjoining the court and found the two talking in low voices, and--an unpardonable breach of etiquette--alone. This was, of course, a stain on the family name, which, according to the code of honour of that day, would be wiped out only with blood, or--a disgrace a thousand times worse than death--the exile of the culprits through the water gate, thus making them outcasts.

The old lord was merciful and allowed them honourable death by the sword. Both recognized the justice of their fate. Kikuno went away to prepare for death, and the young man, with slow and ceremonious dignity, removed his two swords and slipped his right arm from his outer dress, leaving only the white silk undergarment. Then he gave the sash a quick, loosening jerk, and with his short sword in his hand, quietly seated himself on the mat.

I often pity the wronged lord as I think of him sitting there, erect and silent. I know his heart was full of grief as well as bitterness and indignation, but whatever the struggle within, he had to be true to the duty plainly marked out by the inexorable usage of the day.

Poor Kikuno went to her baby boy for a few last loving touches as he lay sleeping in his nurse's arms, but she said good-bye to no one else. She washed the rouge from her lips, loosened her hair, tied it with paper death-bow, and put on her white death-robe. Then she went back to the room where her lover and her lord were silently waiting.

Without the slightest deviation, the unchanging ceremony of Japanese etiquette was carried out. She

kneeled and bowed deeply, first to her wronged lord and then to the beautiful girl-dressed youth beside him. Seating herself with her face to the west, she took her long sash of soft crepe and tightly bound her folded knees. For one moment she placed together her hands, clasping a crystal rosary; then slipping the rosary over one wrist, she lifted her dagger to press the point to her throat. Her lord was a stern and just man, but he must have loved the woman very tenderly, for he did a wonderful thing. Leaning quickly forward, he took away her dagger and placed in her hand his own short sword. It was a Masamune, a precious family heirloom, and sacred because a gift to his grandfather from the great Ieyasu.

Well, they both died; the youth, bravely, like a samurai; but poor Kikuno threw out one hand as she fell, which struck the plaster wall and left a lasting stain.

The man's body was sent to his family with the polite message that his death had taken place suddenly. Everyone understood, and, like the youth himself, recognized the justice of his fate. He was buried at midnight, and ever afterward both the temple and his family gave him only silent death anniversaries. But the woman was buried with great honour--suitable to the mother of the young lord--and a large sum was given to charity in her name. Then the lord forbade any of his descendants ever to cultivate the chrysanthemum flower or to allow the name, Kiku, in the household. The baby, whose frail mother had robbed him of his birthright, was sent away--for no stain must descend to the next generation--and a later-born little one carried on the family name.

The Hood-stained room was closed, and until the burning of the mansion about two hundred years later was never opened. When my father rebuilt his ruined home many of his relatives urged him to leave an open space above the site of that room, but he refused, saying that the kindly spirit of living friends had taught him to believe in the kindly spirit of the dead. My father was a very progressive man for that day.

But the servants never forgot. They said the new room had on its plaster wall the same faint, dark stain of a wide-open hand that was on the wall of the old; and so many ghostly stories were told, that finally, for purely practical reasons, my mother was obliged to close this room also.

The little son of Kikuno became a priest who, in later life, built a small temple on Cedar Mountain. It was so placed that its shadow falls over a lonely nameless grave guarded by a statue of the goddess of Mercy.

But the memory of love and pity cannot die. For almost

three hundred years my stern old ancestor has lain among his people in his extravagant bed of vermillion and charcoal; and for almost three hundred years the descendants of the name whose honour he upheld have, in respect for his unexpressed heart wish, held each year sacred services in memory of 'The Nameless'.¹³

The above represents an extreme way to maintain a class image; that maintenance of class image is significant.

I realize that had I been of perhaps another culture, the efficacy of the quote may well not have been as great. However, I am of my culture, in spite of myself, and I feel that this example exudes the traditional nature of not only Japanese bureaucracy but the Japanese people as well. After all, it's the Japanese people that accomodate their bureaucracy, especially today. The example is alien to the American way of life and it is therefore difficult not to let it unduly influence our perceptions. However, my own military based culture allows some tangible insights into the samurai tradition and how it relates in a somewhat diffused manner to Japanese bureaucracy today. Self-discipline in itself is not unique but the degree of self-discipline may well be unique. It is the self-discipline fused with the samurai class, education and public acceptance that inculcates the ideology of today's bureaucrat in Japan.

Toward the close of the age of feudalism in Japan, one aspect of class hierarchy seemed to be covertly crumbling to a small degree. The higher class samurai became more and more involved in the study of the somewhat rarified Confucian classics, while the Kashi class samurai of lower standing became competent in mathematics and business

administration. As a consequence the lower class samurai began to get placed into more important and critical positions that controlled functionally important and critical aspects of administration. This was a gradual shift, but it was a type of incipient modernization that based itself on the crude beginnings of a merit system which relied on some form of ability within a status-based and patrimonial bureaucracy.¹⁴

It was during this subtle shift that the Tokugawa period abruptly ended in 1867; the Tokugawa period shogunate resigned to a young, fifteen year old Meiji emperor. This was the dawn of the Meiji restoration which completely destroyed the old political power of the Tokugawa shogunate. The new government that was created was one that was to ostensibly revive the supremacy of the emperor. The common slogan was "'revere the Emperor and expel the foreign barbarians'".¹⁵ That slogan apparently reflected just that.

Japan's period of relative isolation was over when Commodore Perry sailed into Uraga harbour in 1853 with four American warships. Perry's incursion may have been a final precursor to the close of the Tokugawa era and as such caused a temporary revulsion to foreign intervention. On the other hand, Commodore Perry was perhaps a precursor of a Japanese modernizing process that depended on Western innovation and which ultimately brought Japan to a hallmark of modernity. The national slogan soon became changed to fukoku, yohei - "'make the country rich and powerful'".¹⁶

Since actual power and authority has never truly been in the hands of the Imperial House, the Meiji government wasn't really any different than it's predecessors. The emperor may have reigned but he never really ruled anything. That seems to be true even today except that it then wasn't openly admitted that the emperor was merely a symbol. What really did result from the Meiji Restoration however, was the establishment of a new oligarchy, originally military in nature, that started Japan in the direction of her perilous trip to complete modernization. This oligarchy, led by an extremely able body of astute men, introduced Japan to a form of parliamentary government for the first time. The oligarchs, within the Meiji Constitution, accepted the basic premise of constitutional government through "power sharing". I must be quick to point out that the concept of representative government was specious to say the least. The idea that the "people" should share in the responsibilities of government didn't go very deep and consequently didn't really have much meaning. The oligarchs were completely aware of the hazards, as they perceived them, of the common people meddling in government; so, they unanimously agreed that such sharing should be carefully controlled and very limited indeed. Nonetheless, they were determined to try this parliamentary experiment involving party participation.¹⁷ If nothing else, it was to provide a fine panoply.

It was with this period of oligarchically controlled

representative government that a civil service system after a Prussian pattern was developed. As pointed out earlier, original Japanese bureaucracy was modeled after a modified Chinese form of administration. Now, another pattern was being used once again. And, once again, it would display the adroit and shrewd tendencies of the Japanese to emulate something in a manner that avoids blind acceptance, but instead incorporates a sagacious modification to their own culture. This new approach to a civil service system placed renewed emphasis on the entrance examinations for the bureaucracy. It was the samurai who would again come to the forefront in Japanese bureaucracy, because they were largely those with the prerequisite education to pass the qualification tests. This time, however, it was largely the lesser samurai that came to the fore in the "new" bureaucracy. They were the ones who had helped bring the new Meiji government into being mainly as a result of their dissatisfaction with their positions and economic plight during the latter stages of the Tokugawa period; they apparently didn't think the "merit" system based on ability was progressing rapidly enough. That's interesting to consider in view of the later adopted and adapted Prussian model of bureaucracy, and the establishment of the Imperial University Ordinance in 1886.

This ordinance was apparently the heartbeat of the new civil service system. It formalized a new philosophy concerning higher education under a nationalistic theme very much like that in Eastern Europe. Furthermore, it

established the Tokyo Imperial University and ordained it, so to speak, as the official training center for the new bureaucracy.¹⁸ This doesn't or shouldn't come as too great a surprise when it is considered that the samurai, who have traditionally cherished education, were very much involved in the oligarchy of the Meiji period. Another interesting move was made when Prince Ito, then Prime Minister, ruled that graduates of Tokyo Imperial University would not be required to take the qualification examinations to receive appointments into the civil service.¹⁹ The Prime Minister apparently saw the bureaucracy as a near omnipotent force within his government and felt this preferential treatment to Tokyo University graduates would promote a fealty of some sort to his rule.

As can easily be imagined, the bureaucracy was soon dominated by Tokyo Imperial University graduates; the important thing to note is that this domination hasn't changed a whole lot even today. That will be discussed more later.

The final shaping and developing of the modern Japanese bureaucracy during the Meiji era was left to none other than a military man. General Yamagata became known as "the father of Japanese bureaucracy".²⁰ It's ironic that the man responsible for the final shaping of a developing administration would be a military man. The obvious influence of the samurai on Japanese bureaucracy is simply overwhelming and I don't think it can be denied. Because of Yamagata's role and influence, the military obviously loomed large, near the end of the nineteenth century, in

shaping the bureaucracy.

When Yamagata became Prime Minister, he went further with his bureaucratic power building as a defense against the advancing tide of emerging political party strength. Yamagata intensely disliked political parties and used his bureaucracy as a redoubtable mechanism to fend them off. He did this once again closing the door of the bureaucracy to "outsiders". It's questionable as to how wide the door really ever was. Most would contend that the "merit" system of the civil service was never a merit system at all in the true sense; and, was in actuality, a symbol since admission to Tokyo Imperial University could be carefully controlled or regulated. Additionally, in his fight against political party patronage, Yamagata pushed through a number of imperial ordinances that also largely closed the doors of government to "outsiders". The governmental hierarchy was now filled all the way to, and including, vice-minister posts as well as bureau chiefs by members of the bureaucracy. Prior to Yamagata's move, such positions had not been filled by civil servants. It's interesting to note that such a system is still in existence today in Japan's bureaucracy. Posts such as vice-ministers and bureau chiefs are held today by regular civil servants.

It's this closed bureaucracy then, that became so powerful in Japan that it was largely independent and was a tool of opposition to the political parties as well as the Diet (parliament/legislature). This was especially

true during the decade prior to WWII. Japan's government was becoming monopolized by the military and thanks to Yamagata's fostering, the bureaucracy was able to assume increasingly crucial roles. Eventually the bureaucracy gained control of the entire government. The military wasn't qualified or experienced in administering national affairs. It was this bureaucracy of the early twentieth century that became reputed as a body contemptuous of the common people. What's more, the Japanese bureaucrat was becoming known as "a paternalistic type of modernizer who had little love for spontaneous popular initiative".²¹ Another characteristic that was being ascribed to the Japanese bureaucrat was that of inflexible attitudes. These derogatory characteristics all sound "vaguely" familiar somehow.

Such regressive elements within the Japanese bureaucracy prevailed until the end of World War II. The point is, however, that the bureaucracy was not manned by incompetent people; on the contrary, the people within the bureaucracy were very well educated and qualified. Their attitudes were sometimes described by such phrases as kanson mimpī, which translated literally means "official exalted--people despised",²⁰ and by inflexibility, arrogance and haughtiness. These terms didn't necessarily receive the stigma that our culture might and does direct on those with such attitudes. It's very important to remember that there is a cultural frame of reference that differs from that of the researcher and those whom the research is about. I find it very easy

to fall into that lacuna between the two cultural frames of reference. It's imperative that we place ourselves in a position to be as much aware as possible of the apposite frame of reference. Cultural disparity that results in distortion is unnecessary and a denigration. It was with the aforementioned in mind that I realized the necessity for a pre-war view of Japanese bureaucratic history. The post-war Japanese bureaucracy cannot be understood without at least a conceptual understanding of its historical roots. Indeed, some might argue that Japan's bureaucracy of yesterday is the bureaucracy of today. With that in mind then, we will turn now to a consideration of Japan's post World War II bureaucracy.

As a means of transition into Japan's post-war bureaucracy, let's first briefly opine a juxtaposition of Japan's immediate pre-war bureaucracy and the pre-war bureaucracy of another highly militarized and industrialized nation. At the onset of the Meiji Restoration, Japan adopted a model of civil bureaucracy from Prussia as was earlier mentioned. In addition, Japan borrowed its judicial system from Germany at about the same time.²³ I think it's interesting that two different countries half-way around the world from each other, both militarize and plunge into a world war as allies at approximately the same time. The most interesting thing is that they also have similar bureaucracies. Some often argue that the German pre-war bureaucracy was as paternalistic as the Japanese bureaucracy.²⁴ It shouldn't really come as a surprise as they were of the same model. Just

how much influence did Japan's modernizing bureaucracy have on her travel towards and ultimate tempestuous dive into a world war? How much influence did Germany's bureaucracy have on her move towards war? The answer to those questions is obviously beyond the scope of this paper and could be the subject of a total comparative study on its own. I was just extremely interested in the coincidence of two countries half a world apart and the same size, plunging simultaneously into a world war as allies, yet on the surface they appear totally different, historically as well as culturally. They did have one thing in common, however, and that was the same basic administrative framework. I would like to know exactly how large a role the two bureaucracies played in the development of World War II. You commonly have administration of development and developing administration. Can you have administrative development of a war?

Since Japan's bureaucracy played such a vital role in her pre-war government, one would logically think that Japan's defeat and unconditional surrender on 2 September, 1945, would naturally lead to a major bureaucratic reorganization and weakening. That doesn't necessarily seem to be the case. In fact, many political experts and historians feel the opposite may have occurred. Comments such as "the Constitution (post-war amendment to the Meiji Constitution) has not materially diminished the prestige and power of the bureaucracy",²⁵ and that the occupation "left virtually untouched the bureaucracy",²⁶ are quite common and

quickly lead to the conclusion that the post-war allied occupation of Japan may not have significantly altered its commodious bureaucracy afterall. As a result of one paramount feature of the occupation, the bureaucracy was actually strengthened and reinforced. That key feature was that the occupational authorities used the Japanese bureaucracy as a vehicle through which they governed Japan during the immediate post-war period.

The occupation was an allied responsibility, however, the United States nearly dominated that responsibility for various reasons. The U.S. did not physically take over the governmental machinery of Japan, rather they chose to exercise their authority indirectly through Japan's existing administration.²⁷ General Douglas MacArthur was appointed the Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers and as such was the individual responsible for implementing occupational policies. The basic theme of the post-surrender policy involved two primary objectives:

1. To insure that Japan will not again become a menace to the United States or to the peace and security of the world.
2. To bring about the eventual establishment of a peaceful and responsible government which...should conform as closely as may be to principles of democratic self-government, but it is not the responsibility of the Allied Powers to impose upon Japan any form of government not supported by the freely expressed will of the people.²⁸

So, it appears that the mission of the occupation authorities could be boiled down to one of a dual nature: demilitarization and democratization. That may be abstracting too far and resulting in a specious simplicity. While I'm sure the demilitarization was a vast and complex job

within itself, at least its final objective was fairly lucid, uncomplicated and understood. By late 1948 this task had been all but accomplished. Article 9 of the post-war amendment to the Meiji Constitution stipulated that Japan no longer had the right as a nation to threaten or use force as a means for solving international disputes. "Never before in modern history had a great power been so thoroughly demilitarized."²⁹

Democratization, on the other hand, wasn't so easily identified. What was democracy? Indeed, what does democracy mean to a people whose traditions haven't necessarily fostered such a "thing" as democracy? I'm not sure the members of the occupation had such a clear view of democracy; they undoubtedly had what they considered a clear view of democracy and thus the democratization in Japan largely reflected the American version of democracy and freedom. Once again, the bureaucracy seemed to be involved as a key aspect. If democracy was basically alien to the Japanese people as a whole, it was much more foreign to the Japanese bureaucracy. Afterall, the Japanese people were traditionally used to a role of subservience and devotion to their superiors. But that's not necessarily true of the members of the bureaucracy; they were largely part of that rather anti-democratic past of an authoritarian nature. How were the true meanings and implications of an American form of democracy going to set with this aspect of the Japanese populace? Remember, the bureaucracy was going to be the

method of transmission of "this" democracy to the Japanese nation as a whole.

It was at this point that I think the occupation authorities demonstrated an unsurpassed shrewdness that has enabled a form of democracy to survive in Japan. The occupation authorities decided on a strategy of involving a large portion of the Japan populace in supporting and implementing the occupational reform programs. Members of the occupation knew that if a form of democracy was to survive beyond the end of the occupation period, the Japanese people would have to learn first-hand the "value" of the system that they were to live by.

The reforms of the occupation were an attempt to do just that--involve and benefit the Japanese people in general. The hope was that each segment of the Japanese people would gain from various reform programs, realize their value and be willing to insist on their continuation after the conclusion of the occupation. The basic embodiment of the occupational reforms and the segments of the populace that hopefully would benefit are at Table 4.

It seems the key reform that is pertinent to our consideration of Japan's bureaucracy was the purge of ultra-nationalist officials from designated public and private offices. More than two hundred thousand individuals were either purged or forbidden to hold public office or managerial positions in areas of private business.³⁰ That number is staggering; it must have been a major task to

TABLE 4

Post-War Reform

<u>Reform Program</u>	<u>Japanese Interest Served</u>
1. The purge of ultranationalist officials from designated public and private offices.	Those who succeeded to the offices thus vacated.
2. Expansion of the franchise.	All adult Japanese women plus all men from 20 to 25 who had earlier been denied the right to vote.
3. The grant to labor of the right to organize and bargain collectively.	Japanese labor in general.
4. Land reform.	The some seventy per cent of farm households that had been tenants or part owners and part tenants before the war.
5. Legal reforms of the traditional family system.	Women and the younger generation in general.
6. Decentralization of the powers of government.	Local and regional interests.
7. Educational reforms.	The youth of Japan.

Source: Ward, Robert E., Japan's Political System, Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1967, p. 19.

simply compile such a list, and then to apply and enforce the purge must have been a most painful travail. It's also important to realize that all of the basic reform measures in Table 4 are important in regard to the bureaucracy since it was the bureaucracy that had to implement them as well as control and implement the "purge" of many of its own forces. Even though it's true the "purge" largely involved ex-military members, Japan's bureaucracy was still very much effected by it. What I'm not sure about is exactly how it was effected; if the results were adverse they must have overcome them.

Indeed, the occupation authorities attempted various reforms and reorganization techniques to streamline and modernize the Japanese bureaucracy in the name of efficiency. As a result of encouragement from occupation authorities, no less than four laws were passed by the Japanese government itself in a largely vain attempt to reform the Japanese administrative structure. Additionally, an attempt late in the period of occupation was made at the purely American technique of using a "brain trust" of prominent citizens called the Government Ordinance Advisory Committee. This was the final move by occupation forces to attempt a democratization of Japan's bureaucracy. Unfortunately, these efforts proved largely ineffective. This was primarily because the major road block to such reform was the fact that the occupation forces used the existing Japanese bureaucracy as a system through which indirect rule was managed.³¹

Article 15 of the new post-war democratic constitution

provided the most significant and potential impact for Japan's bureaucracy. Article 15 declared that:

The people have the alienable right to choose their public officials and to dismiss them. All public officials are servants of the whole community and not any good thereof...³²

Talk about a shock to the system! The fact that the bureaucratic members were to be considered as servants of the people was nearly incomprehensible to many Japanese, commoners and bureaucrats alike. Article 15 was 180 degrees out from what prevailed in pre-war Japan. As previously mentioned, in pre-war times the civil servants were theoretically responsible to the emperor and since the emperor was theoretically "Omnipotent" (Note the capital "O") and could do no wrong, his administrators were thusly more or less naturally extended a degree of omnipotence (small "o") as well.

The sacrosanct nature of the pre-war Japanese bureaucrat was well established. Moreover,

Japanese bureaucrats have never been hampered by a set of values which holds that the less there is of government, the better; Japan has no laissez-faire legacy.³³

The people have traditionally looked to a paternalistic government for leadership and assistance. The very thought of the people being superior and having the right to discharge bureaucrats while simultaneously choosing their representatives was a big step. Article 15 of the new Japanese Constitution must have had a remarkable impact on the Japanese people. Indeed, perhaps because the step was too large and the impact too great, the application and

true meaning of it was actually avoided. This was combined with the fact that occupational forces used the bureaucracy as it generally existed to implement their authority. Still another complication was that a complex modern government with a new Diet (legislative body), which was naturally weak, forced dependence on an experienced bureaucracy. All this led to basically an unchanged and uneffected bureaucracy. As alluded to earlier, the occupation of Japan from 2 September, 1945, to 28 April, 1952, very likely only served to strengthen her bureaucracy and provide it with additional sources of power. The spirit of democratization was there but apparently the Japanese bureaucracy avoided its meaning and implications to, at least, a large degree.

Thus, the stage is set for the bureaucracy in Japan today; it seems we find it largely unchanged and have already grasped an understanding of its visceral nature. There is today no large scale change in Japan's bureaucracy from that bureaucracy of 1952, or earlier for that matter.³⁴ That's not to say that other aspects of the Japanese government haven't radically changed; the subject at hand, however, is the Japanese bureaucrat.

Carl J. Friedrich has said, "' All relative study of government has to start with an understanding of bureaucracy (or whatever else one prefers to call it), because no government can function without it'"³⁵ . Since bureaucracy seems to form the indisputable core of a modern government, it seems to make sense then, to look at the government structure that is apparently built around the bureaucracy in question.

Hopefully, such a view will lend itself to a deeper understanding of Japanese bureaucracy today--a bureaucracy that seems to incorporate many of yesterday's characteristics. The organization of Japan's national government (figure 1) possesses some of the basics of the Meiji period government but has received many organizational changes largely as a result of the occupation era and that attempt to democratize Japan's government.

The present Japanese Constitution, enacted as an amendment to the 1889 Meiji Constitution in late 1946, did not necessarily fulfill the ideological expectations of a constitution being born in the midst of ubiquitously shared ideals and values. Rather, it was conceived hurriedly in a post-war environment by occupation authorities who adopted their own form of government as the requisite form of government for a defeated nation. It was debated in the Japanese parliament and with some nudging by occupation authorities, accepted by (or imposed on) the Japanese government.

If the Japanese had been given a free hand in writing their constitution, they would undoubtedly have stressed traditional Japanese values, and produced a more authoritarian and paternalistic document.³⁶

Unlike the Meiji Constitution, the present Constitution provides for a doctrine of popular sovereignty.

We, the Japanese people, acting through our duly elected representatives in the National Diet,...do proclaim that sovereign power resides with the people and do firmly establish this Constitution.³⁷

This is the proclamation and essence relayed by the preamble of the present Japanese Constitution. As mentioned earlier,

this represents a drastic political, social and cultural change for the Japanese people. Nonetheless, the present Constitution does represent and provide the legal framework for a democratic system of government. Once again, we can see the importance of the often demonstrated Japanese capacity for adopting and adapting paradigms of various governmental aspects to their own way of life.

Under the new Constitution the emperor no longer enjoys a divine right nor is he considered the sole source of all legal authority and political power. The emperor's public life is primarily involved with the various ceremonial functions of state. This is clearly the role to which the new Constitution now relegates him.³⁸ The emperor is now officially recognized as,

...the symbol of the State and of the unity of the people, deriving his position from the will of the people with whom resides sovereign power. The emperor is to perform only such acts in matters of State as are provided for in this Constitution and he shall not have powers related to government.³⁹

As can be seen from Figure 1, the center of the government apparatus is the administrative organs embodied in the prime minister, cabinet and the various ministries. The executive office in Japan, as in most other modern governments, seems to exercise a good deal of power. In addition to the obvious functional reasons, Japan's executive branch has tradition on its side; an executive source representing a center of authority and power has been the historical governmental perspective in Japan. The Prime Minister is

appointed or elected (there seems to be some disagreement as to which it actually is) by the National Diet. The Prime Minister in turn appoints as well as removes his various ministers. The Constitution actually requires that only a bare majority of the ministers be members of the Diet, however, very few have ever actually been non-Diet members.⁴⁰ The Prime Minister seems to maintain a certain degree of longevity. Since 1955, when the Liberal Democratic Party was formed from the merger of two smaller conservative parties, there were only five prime ministers through 1972 and three of those left office only because of illness.⁴¹ Some might argue that such avoidance of cabinet revolutions would be indicative of political stability. But the stability seems to stop with the Prime Minister.

Every prime minister has had a history of reshuffling his cabinet on almost a yearly basis as a result of trying to keep everyone happy and, ergo, keeps himself out of hot water while fishing for votes within the Diet. It seems all politicians in Japan want and actively seek a cabinet post, even if only for a short while. The prestige of being a minister is apparently great. The frequent changing of the cabinet's membership seems to be an accepted measure of instability within the Japanese government.

The implications for public administrators by this frequent shifting of ministers is rather obvious. No minister, or at the most only a few ministers, will ever have their jobs long enough to become proficient and understand their particular ministry. That leaves his immediate subordinate,

a vice-minister, to maintain stability and control the actual day to day operation of the ministry in question. Guess who the vice-minister is? He's our friendly bureaucrat and everyone subordinate to him is also a civil servant. One shouldn't wonder about the power of Japan's bureaucracies! In addition, most prime ministers since 1955 have been bureaucrats.⁴² Also, more and more high level bureaucrats are seeking public office and getting it; there will be more on that later.

Prior to World War II the national legislature was known as the Imperial Diet. Today it is the National Diet. Japan was the first Asian country to establish a popularly elected legislature; Japan's parliament came into existence in 1890.⁴³ To be sure, its power has changed considerably since WWII. In the pre-war era the Diet played only an extremely minor role that the executive office could generally overlook without difficulty. Its most important function was likely that of symbolism. After the war, the Constitution changed the status of the National Diet. The 1946 Constitution said, "The Diet shall be the highest organ of State power, and shall be the sole law-making organ of the State." To give it credit for having that much power would be going too far. The fact is that not much legislation "originates" in the Diet itself.⁴⁴ Because of the stability and expertise of the bureaucracy, most of the proposed legislation is initiated within the administrative ministries and comes up to the Diet through the cabinet.⁴⁵ As a result,

the Diet is probably most successful at exercising a veto power as well as sifting and sorting various amendments and newly proposed legislation. Internally, the House of Representatives is unquestionably the more powerful of the two houses as it can override the House of Chancellors (figure 1) by a re-vote achieving a two-thirds majority.⁴⁶

The judiciary has also gained considerable power and prestige since the close of World War II. In pre-war times the judiciary was simply under the control of the executive. Now, the judiciary is independent and is comprised of a system not entirely unlike that of the judicial system in the United States. The Japanese court system doesn't obtain the results that the court system in the United States does, however. It's a Japanese tradition to depend on social harmony and amiability; most Japanese prefer a mediation of mutual friends and/or relatives as a means of settling disputes rather than the harsh and cold system of litigation in courts.⁴⁷ As a result, Japan has a relatively small number of practicing lawyers and the court system in Japan has not been overly aggressive nor has it overtly tried to assert its influence as an integral part of the overall governmental system. The Supreme Court, as an example, has avoided declarations of unconstitutionality as well as overturning major pieces of legislation.⁴⁸ Once again, we see an implication for the bureaucracy; remember, that major legislation which likely may not be turned over by the judiciary, was very likely originated in the

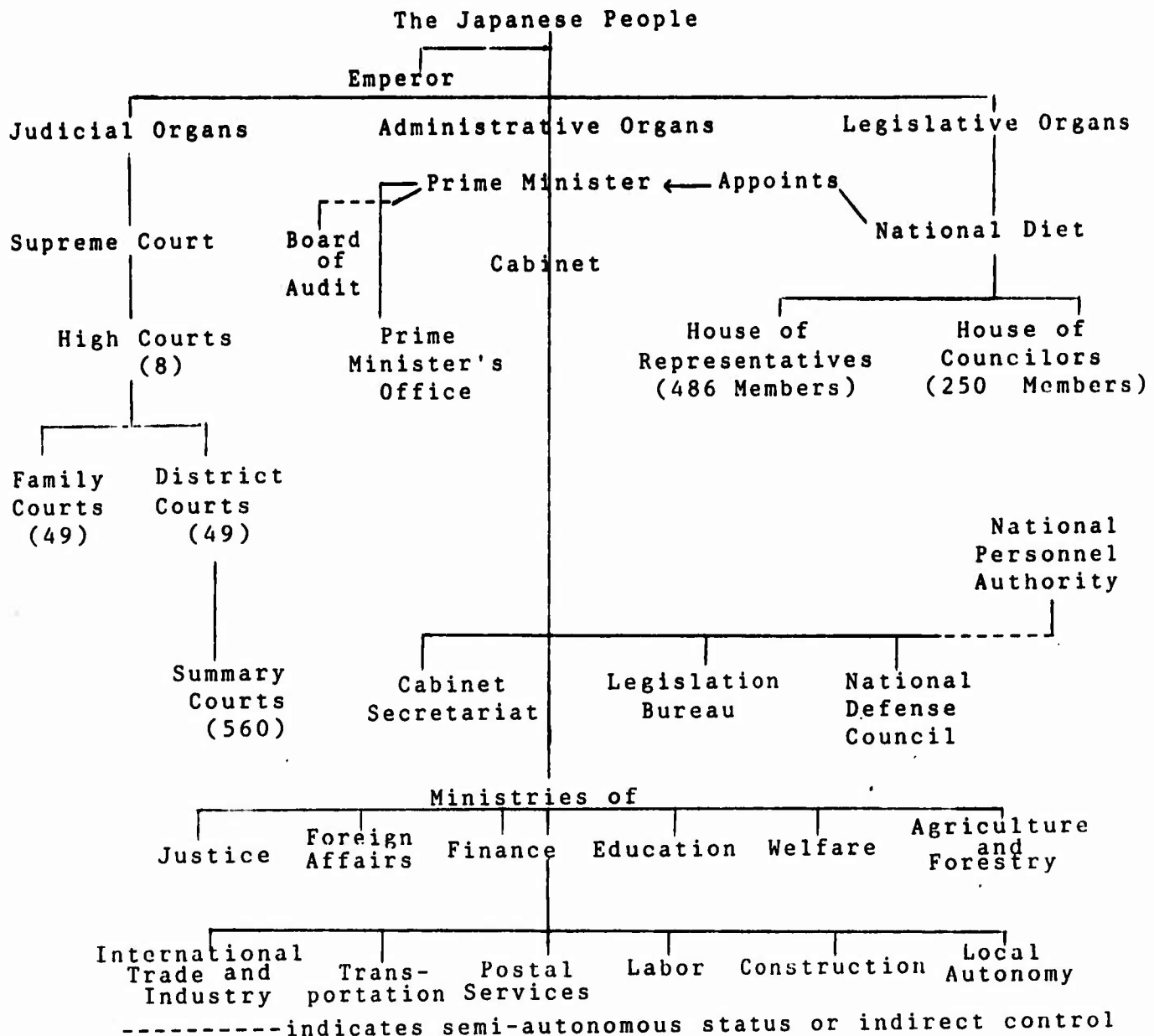


FIGURE 1

THE ORGANIZATION OF JAPAN'S NATIONAL GOVERNMENT

Source: Ward, Robert E., Japan's Political System. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1967, p. 84.

bureaucracy rather than the National Diet. The National Diet may have passed it because it was endorsed by the Prime Minister and the Diet members may possibly have wanted to stay in the good graces of the Prime Minister, hoping for a cabinet post. The bureaucracy appears then, to be very well ensconced within the government of Japan.

There seem to be several basic reasons for the bureaucratic dominated brand of politics in Japan. First, it's important to realize that it's traditional for the higher level Japanese bureaucrats to be involved in politics and policy-making. Secondly, as previously suggested in various ways, the National Diet is poorly equipped and too weak as a body to handle the rather complex problems of modern society. There are signs of improvement but perhaps because the political arena is receiving more and more bureaucratic members and, therefore, more experience. Next is the fact that as a result of rapid technological advances and their need for a newer brand of an amalgamated modern political and administrative decision-making, it's unrealistic to expect a sharp dichotomy between the political process and the administrative process. Finally, it's an undeniable fact that members of the bureaucracy have been infiltrating into the ranks of politicians upon their retirement from the civil service.⁴⁹ Tables 5 and 6 provide some empirical evidence to support that contention.

Ex-bureaucrats obviously have abundant experience and know-how. It's not surprising then, that they might

TABLE 5

Number and Percentage of Ex-Bureaucrats Among Major
Cabinet Members Between 1955 and 1966

Cabinet position	Major cabinet members	Ex-bureaucrats	Percentage of ex-bureaucrats -
Minister of Foreign Affairs	6	4	67
Minister of Finance	6	3	50
Minister of Justice	11	5	46
Minister of Education	9	5	56
Minister of Health and Welfare	12	7	58
Minister of Agriculture and Forestry	10	5	50
Minister of International Trade and Industry	11	5	46
Minister of Transportation	14	6	44
Minister of Postal Services	14	7	50
Minister of Labor	8	1	13
Minister of Construction	10	1	10
Minister of Local Self-Government	12	6	50
Director of Economic Planning Board	<u>6</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>17</u>
Total	129	56	43

Source: Itoh, Hiroshi, Japanese Politics--An Inside View, Ithaca,
New York: Cornell University Press, 1973, p. 22.

TABLE 6

Number and Percentage of Ex-Bureaucrats
Among Major Officials of the Liberal Democratic Party (up to July 1966)

Position	Total officeholders	Ex-bureaucrats	Percentage of ex-bureaucrats
Secretary-General	8	3	38
Chairman of the Executive Board	11	4	36
Chairman of the Policy Board	12	6	50
Chairman of the Financial Committee	4	2	50
Chairman of the National Organization Committee	12	3	25
Chairman of the Publicity Committee	8	2	25
Chairman of the Diet Relations	13	2	15
Chairman of the Party Discipline Committee	<u>10</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>50</u>
Total	78	27	35

Source: Itoh, Hiroshi, Japanese Politics--An Inside View, Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1973, p. 23.

expect an easier election victory than non-experienced competition. In addition, Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) members are eager to seek out such experience, knowledge and most of all, an individual likely to support their conservative views.

It is also natural that bureaucrats who can go no further than the rank of vice-minister, should aspire to go into politics in their desire to maintain after retirement status consistent with their bureaucratic position and in search of further fame.⁵⁰

This political interplay by the Japanese bureaucrat differs markedly from the British or American civil services. The British and American administrators don't normally find themselves attracted to the bureaucracy because of political aspirations and ambitions; in Japan, on the other hand, many young highly qualified college graduates are attracted to the Japanese bureaucracy because of both the prestige that a Japanese bureaucrat obtains and because he is, as a result of his bureaucratic tenure, highly qualified and likely to succeed in such important avenues as a cabinet post or perhaps even prime minister. No wonder Japan's bureaucracy has very often claimed the "cream of the crop" of university graduates.⁵¹ I don't think the civil service recruitment in the United States is so fortunate.

That brings us to a brief consideration of one of the most important characteristics of the post-war Japanese higher bureaucrats. That important characteristic is a high "educational homogeneity". It's important to understand

that education is considered very important and related to social status in Japan; this importance is illustrated by the fact that in 1954, for example, 99.2 per cent of Japan's higher civil servants had attended college.⁵²

Not only is education highly respected in Japan, it is even more highly regarded when it comes from the Tokyo Imperial University, especially for bureaucrats. Approximately 80 per cent of the higher (top three levels) civil servants in Japan have graduated from Tokyo Imperial University; never less than 50 per cent, regardless of position level or survey year, have graduated from that University. In Japan, Tokyo Imperial University is often referred to as the "nursery school for bureaucrats".⁵³ Furthermore, there are 169 high level positions in the bureaucracy above the bureau chief rank; University of Tokyo graduates fill 141 of them as of 1984 (83 per cent).⁵⁴ I might refer to Tōdai (University of Tokyo) as the West Point of bureaucracy!

The field of specialization at a university in Japan also results in a homogeneity of education. It seems that "generalists" (legal studies) are usually preferred to "specialists" for senior positions in business as well as for the bureaucracy. Approximately 67 per cent of the higher bureaucrats in post-war Japan have attended faculties of law. "More than half attended the Faculty of Law at Tokyo University."⁵⁵ I think its safe to say that Japan's bureaucrats have a great deal in common regarding education.

Other areas of commonality among Japan's bureaucrats involve such things as career patterns, social origins and organizational variations. While the post-war bureaucrat is likely to come from all parts of Japan and thus is from a less narrow social base than in pre-war times, he nonetheless has a great deal in common with his contemporaries from a social origin standpoint. The bureaucrat is likely to come from a Japanese middle class family and certainly shares a remarkably homogeneous ethnic origin with his peers. The Japanese people are extremely homogeneous relative to their "ethnic origin, language, religion and regionalism".⁵⁶

Also, the Japanese bureaucrat is likely to experience a rather standard career pattern. He will be "generally promoted by seniority among the ranks of those with similar education".⁵⁷ Seniority seems to prevail within the merit system.

Lateral mobility is not very evident and results in another aspect of bureaucratic homogeneity, even if within the bureaucracy itself. There is a very strong tendency for a civil servant to remain with his original ministry. Such an inclination leads to loyalty to respective ministries and ministerial cliques which are not unlike the rather common school cliques. These cliques obviously tend to foster clanishness among higher bureaucrats in Japan.

In view of the aforementioned, it would be difficult to abrogate the importance of groups within the Japanese bureaucracy. Homogeneity of social background, education

and career patterns tend to result in a bureaucratic-wide independence. Further, the emphasis on school cliques (gakubatsu) and ministerial cliques (shobatsu) further exemplify the importance of group phenomena within the bureaucracy. Such dependence on groups perhaps reveals the traditional weakness of individualism in Japanese society as well as the bureaucracy. Akira Kubota would call our attention to the fact that such group importance is a result of the "remnants of feudalism" and obviously to be expected of a nation that has had democracy very recently (relatively speaking) thrust upon them.⁵⁸ At any rate, we can doubt the importance of the individual in the Japanese bureaucracy relative to groups. Japanese culture has no real place for the concept of individualism.⁵⁹

Perhaps it would be appropriate to close a consideration of the Japanese bureaucracy with a look at how that bureaucracy has grown in more recent years. The speed at which the bureaucracy has expanded at both the national and local level is, indeed, startling and certainly must be indicative of the role the bureaucracy plays in Japanese life and government. In the twenty years between 1931 and 1951, the Japanese bureaucracy nearly tripled in size (from 591,000 to 1,402,000) at the national level alone. At the prefectural (local) level it has increased nearly fifteen times (from 90,000 to 1,302,000) during the same twenty year period.⁶⁰ By 1965, Japan's national bureaucracy had grown another rough half million (1,910,305). In 1965 both

national and local governments totalled approximately four million persons; thus, in 1965 about one out of every twelve workers in Japan was a member of the bureaucracy.⁶¹ And finally, by 1982 (the most current statistics available) the Japanese national and local bureaucracies totalled over five million people (approximately 5,145,781: local bureaucracy as of 1980--3,167,744 and the national level as of 1982--1,978,037).⁶² It appears that most of the growth during the 1965 to 1980-82 period has been at the prefecture level; the national bureaucracy has remained relatively constant during the last 17 years. Nonetheless, overall the Japanese bureaucracy has continued its growth apace.

Such an enormous inflation in a post-war bureaucracy is, I feel, very illustrative of the general climate of acceptance and is telltale, to some degree, of the nature of the Japanese bureaucracy as a part of Japan's society and culture today.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study of the Japanese bureaucracy has attempted to objectively examine the various more-or-less positive aspects of that bureaucracy. Frequent charges of alleged bureaucratic shortcomings such as formalism, red tape, impersonality, conservatism and the like, have often only clouded the ambient objectivity necessary for a meaningful understanding, and, often result in a baleful and prosaic misrepresentation; "...these criticisms--as with political polemics in most countries--conceal as much as they reveal about the exact role of Japanese bureaucracy".¹ While surely some of these alleged bureaucratic infidelities are realistic and true to some degree, I feel they are an attempt to represent and thus denigrate bureaucracy as a phenomenon rather than actively assist with an understanding of the Japanese bureaucracy.

To be precise, it's my succinct conclusion that the bureaucracy of today in Japan reflects a great deal of its earliest historical beginnings. Cultural traits such as self-reliance, self-discipline and prestige among the samurai have had a decided influence on the formation of a modern bureaucracy. It's especially my opinion that the modernization of Japan's bureaucracy during the Meiji era placed Japan's bureaucracy in particularly close historical perspective to the bureaucracy of today. I just don't

see a large schism between Japan's pre-war and post-war bureaucracies; a major difference is simply not there to be found. Only minor evolutionary changes persist with some small influence of the occupation period. On the whole, the social, economic and political processes in Japan are still, today, colored by a strong bureaucratic flavor as they were in earlier times.

The tendency toward the synthesis of high civil servants and the leaders of the conservative party may well threaten the neutrality of a civil bureaucracy within a democratic society when there is ideally supposed to be an abrupt distinction between politics and administration. What did I just say? Is there really supposed to be an abrupt distinction between politics and administration--by whose standards or from what frame of reference? One must be careful, although I suppose it could be argued that "true American" spawned democracy would likely expect that distinction. Traditionally speaking, however, this fusion merely supports my earlier contention.

In spite of much imitation over long periods of Japan's history, it didn't necessarily unduly influence or make Japan's bureaucracy something un-Japanese in nature. This imitation was selectively adapted to home conditions in a manner of sagaciousness relatively unique to the Japanese. In effect, they made it their own through an organic growth.

In short, traditional Japanese bureaucracies depended on a popular compliance to centralized authority

and the omnipotence of the "superior". Today's Japan, though fairly well democratized through a hasty implementation, still largely counts on the authority exercised by the executive and continues to lend status and prestige in unusual quantities to the leaders and administrators. As a result, the bureaucracy continues to stand strong and united against other organs of the State such as the National Diet.

In my estimation, Japan's bureaucracy has and will continue to occupy an especially strategic position in Japan's political, national security and economic systems. Japanese administration will continue to exert an influence and maintain system stability to a much larger degree than would be acceptable in other modern democratic nations. "Japan is still the bureaucrat's paradise and the 'wonderland of bureaucracy.'"²

I'm afraid I've found it necessary to be rather disappointing with regard to my recommendations. I had hoped to find some sort of panacea for our own seemingly beleaguered bureaucracy within the United States. I've come to the rather uncomfortable and thorny realization that the malignity with which our bureaucracy is considered by most people merely reflects our traditions. I think an iniquitous treatment of our bureaucracy is as much a product of our historical and cultural perspective as Japan's rather prestigious approach to her bureaucracy is a product of her historical and cultural environment.

Indeed, I could make some recommendations that might speciously seem to improve our apparent administrative malady, however, they would likely be regarded as heretical and never "grow" in the soil of the "brand" of democracy engendered by the United States of America. I'm personally not willing to pay the price that may be necessary. In a very laconic manner, I simply don't recommend that the United States adopt most of the Japanese customs relative to our bureaucracy. We couldn't duplicate most of Japan's cultural history, from which much of her bureaucracy evolved, at any rate. The primary insight provided by this study was an invaluable and lucid understanding that the Japanese bureaucracy is uniquely her own and not something imposed upon her; certainly not something that could be easily copied and implemented. There are three exceptions, however. Those evolve around pride, education and interface.

The United States should incorporate more pride into its bureaucracy. Now that sounds as profound as it sounds simple; obviously not so simple. As we have seen, however, from this case study, the Japanese bureaucracy thrives on pride and to some degree at least, can contribute its elite tendencies to that product. Why can't the American bureaucracy develop some of that pride? Pride is ignorant of cultural involvement and could just as easily be adapted by Anglo-Saxon as Oriental. It seems that more pride might be exactly the ingredient needed to improve some of the internal

malady that currently affects our bureaucracy today. Hopefully a dose of pride would improve self-esteem which would in turn produce an accretion of respect both from within and externally to our bureaucracy. In other words, pride should result in bureaucrats wanting to do a good job and, ergo, being ashamed to do a poor job; simultaneously of course, outsiders will recognize a job well done and things theoretically should snowball. The Japanese, as we have seen, surely make it work well; could we be as successful? I think so. The generation and application of that pride would be a separate subject for another paper; I can safely state here, however, that an increase in that commodity would significantly improve our national and local bureaucracies over time. The Japanese system is a lucid personification of that fact.

A second recommendation would be to increase the educational level of American bureaucrats. As I've discussed, the Japanese employ a system of civil service examinations as a "Dragon Gate"*, allowing or denying access to their elite profession of public administration.³ It takes a good education from a prestigious university in most cases to "pass beyond" the average and gain entrance into the Japanese bureaucracy. Why doesn't the United States carefully design and employ such a system? We should increase the

*Dragon Gate--a triple waterfall in a steep gorge on the Yellow River. Legend stated that any fish that could pass upstream beyond that point became a dragon. In Japan, as in China, the term Dragon Gate became a metaphor for civil service examinations.

difficulty of the current civil service examinations at the local and national levels. That would require a better education to gain entrance. Educational statistics for our bureaucracy are not presently available, however, I contend that if we were to juxtapose the U.S. bureaucracy with the Japanese bureaucracy relative to educational levels of the members, there would be a significant disparity. If you want to increase pride and prestige, make the goal more difficult to obtain; if you want to improve personal quality, most people would agree that better educated people would certainly be a start. Of course, some gradual evolution-type plan would have to be instituted and implemented in order to keep the bureaucracy functional during the transition period. At any rate, the Japanese did "it" (educated their bureaucrats and then tested them for entrance) very well indeed, as we've seen from the case study. Why can't we do it as well? Education should not be, certainly, a cultural barrier.

Finally, I'd like to recommend that we interface with the Japanese bureaucracy better. That is to say, the U.S. bureaucracy should pay more attention to its interaction with the Japanese counterpart. Presently, we are "beaten" in every engagement by that "elite" professional group that I've talked so much about in this case study. Why? Is it because our bureaucracy is so slovenly compared to theirs? That may, indeed, be the reason. At any rate, we can and must do better. It is bad enough to conclude that we have a bureaucracy that American citizens treat disdainfully as discussed in Chapter III. That "badness" is

then compounded when we know and understand some other bureaucracy besides our own is considered to be functionally elite and prestigious. Now, the final insult comes when the two bureaucrats interface and the American administrator comes out the loser. That interface occurs rather often inasmuch as Japan is considered the only non-Western country to achieve social, economic and political goals equal to or greater than the major Western powers. In fact, Japan's achievements have been so influential that many would argue the successful relationship between the U.S. and Japan is critical to American national interests as well as to the over-all prosperity and security of the entire Western world. So, it's fair to say that Japanese and American foreign-policy bureaucrats interface more-or-less constantly. The crux of the problem then, is that Japan has repeatedly demonstrated a "tremendous bureaucratic edge over the United States".⁴

For the past 30 years or so, the United States has focused on China; originally as a potential enemy and now as an ally to assist in containing Soviet expansion. As a result, Japan has always been relegated to the "junior partner" role.⁵ But who does the U.S. have a trade deficit with, who does the U.S. have a security treaty with, who produces one of the world's largest GNP factors and greatest per capita incomes, and who's the regional "power" in Asia today?

Japanese policy makers apparently realize that in the final analysis Japan needs the United States more than the United States needs Japan so they've aimed their very

professional and elite bureaucracy at the United States with a deliberate ken. As a result, they've been the winner in nearly every accountable engagement.

...the structural gap between Washington and Tokyo is unusually wide. Japan has an elite bureaucracy, an exceptionally weak parliament and a Confucian legal tradition. The United States has no formal senior civil service, a powerful Congress, and a legal system based on English common law. Executive agencies and departments have difficulty relating to their Japanese counterparts.... As a result, fragmented, often ill-prepared U.S. bureaucrats struggle to cope with Japan's centralized better-staffed and better coordinated institutions.⁶

The aforementioned quote neatly sums up what this paper has been about. Obviously, we need to at least upgrade the priority of our emphasis with which we interface with Japan. We need to put Japan on "our" front burner and improve our skills relative to that bureaucratic interchange. Following that we need to work on the pride, esteem and education of our own bureaucracy. Clearly these variables require a delicate synthesis over time rather than a one-at-a-time, all at once application.

All this reveals an implication for public administrators in the United States--recognize something for what it is and seek an understanding of its origins. The bureaucrat had better learn the nature of his involvement within our own democratic system if he's ever to improve that system. I hope this study might reveal that such a propinquity is necessary in understanding cultural differences. Perhaps the vituperate treatment that so defames our bureaucracy is a necessary and integral part of our overall system; if that

is so, then our public administrators should recognize that fact and use such regard in an affirmative manner rather than giving himself up to the profligation he perceives that others attribute to him and his system. I'd like to end on the following note for our local and national level bureaucrats in the United States: Don't let yourself fall into the morass of self-pity over disparaging remarks. Recognize our cultural traditions and, ergo, our environment for what it is and then improve our bureaucracy within that frame of reference.

NOTES

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